

Minutes of 16 July 2007
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs
6048 Fleming Administration Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1340
Phone: (734) 764-0303
Fax: (734) 764-6564

Internet Address: <http://www.umich.edu/~sacua/>
Approved minutes: <http://www.umich.edu/~sacua/sacmin/sacuaminutes.html>

MINUTES OF THE SACUA MEETING OF 16 JULY 2007

Present: Friedman, Frier, MacAdam, Potter, Riles, Smith (chair), Stark, Thouless; Lehman; Carr, Schneider

Absent: Fraser

Guests: K. Brown, Professor Emeritus Irwin Goldstein, Professor Henry Pollack, Dean Emeritus Giles Bole

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED:

1. Draft agenda
2. Draft minutes of the SACUA meeting of 25 June 2007
3. Revisions made by President Coleman to the SACUA minutes of 18 June 2007
4. Revisions made by Provost Sullivan to the SACUA minutes of 18 June 2007
5. Electronic mail from President Coleman to the Faculty and Staff regarding the "Search for Vice President and General Counsel", dated 15 July 2007
6. The Faculty Governance Update entitled, "Annual Lecture on Academic and Intellectual Freedom", dated July 2007.
7. ["U-M is making a mistake," by Irwin J. Goldstein, Ann Arbor News, dated 01 July 2007](#)
8. Proposed memo to President Coleman from University of Michigan Faculty and Staff drafted by Irwin J. Goldstein
9. Electronic mail from Keith Riles to Bruce Frier regarding "The M-Care Transition" dated 11 July 2007
10. List of Priority Issues developed in the SACUA Retreat, 11 June 2007

Chair Smith convened the meeting at 2:00 P.M. The proposed agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 25 June 2007 were corrected and approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Smith announced:

1. Nadine Strossen, president of the ACLU, will deliver the Academic Freedom Lecture on Friday, 9 November in the Honigman Auditorium of the Law School.
2. The president has named a General Counsel search committee.
3. Professor Friedman and the chair met with President Coleman last week. Topics of discussion included the Davis, Markert, Nicherson lecture and communications with the Board of Regents. The president suggested that SACUA come to its annual luncheon with the Regents with an agenda and hold a regular meeting.
4. The next regularly scheduled private meeting with the provost will be one week from Thursday.

Professor Potter reported that the Provost held the first meeting of her budget advisory committee. The structure of the university budget was described as consisting of four categories: general fund, business-like income, endowments, and indirect costs. One issue is that state support is 24% and tuition is 65% of the general fund. Two contingencies under consideration in the event of a sudden decrease in state support are (1) changing the mix of in-state and out of state students, and (2) increasing undergraduate enrollment by up to 2000 students per year.

DAVIS, MARKERT, NICKERSON LECTURE

Chair Smith reviewed the history of the Senate Assembly's Academic Freedom Lecture. Professor Riles remarked that one of the greatest threats to academic freedom today is conformity of thought. He said it might be informative to invite someone from the former Soviet Union to deliver the AFL. Professor Stark said that he would prefer to hear from a wider spectrum of voices than in the past.

FOOTBALL STADIUM RENOVATION

At 2:35 P.M. Professor Emeritus Goldstein and several additional visitors made a presentation that voiced concerns about the process that had been followed in seeking Regental approval for renovation of Michigan Stadium. He cited a series of irregularities perpetrated by the president and the Board of Regents that seemed to circumvent open discussion, including:

1. placing controversial votes on meeting agendas at the twelfth hour, after denying that they would be action items;
2. recruiting luxury box proponents to make presentations, but barring opponents from speaking;
3. holding votes during summer or in Dearborn to distance themselves from dissent;
4. withholding budget information that shows the luxury boxes do not pay for themselves, but rather require massive subsidies from regular admission seating.

Professor Goldstein requested that SACUA petition President Coleman, Athletic Director Martin, and the concurring Regents to conduct an honest and open review of their decisions, and further asked SACUA to hold hearings in a campus-wide forum that could include participation by student and alumni groups. Dean Emeritus Bole stated that the breaches of trust go to the heart of what the institution is about. Both he and Professor Goldstein pointed out that the bonds issued to finance the project would be backed by the full faith and credit of the university, guaranteed against future student tuition, and driving up the borrowing costs of future capital for academic projects for decades. They said the action crosses the sacrosanct line between athletics and academics.

Professor Potter responded that the provost has said that the new stadium was the best way to keep the athletic department out of the general fund. Professor Friedman asked whether SACUA had considered the matter previously. Both Chair Smith and Professor Frier acknowledged that SACUA had considered the matter, but had decided not to intervene one way or the other. Professor Riles said that his recollection was that SACUA was kept in the dark during the formulative stages of the process. He said that he thought SACUA should voice its dissatisfaction with the process. Professors Thouless and Friedman agreed there is a process issue. Professor Riles noted that the University Shared Governance Task Force has made proposals regarding consultation between administration and elected faculty governance, but that the provost has not yet consented to the proposals.

A student visitor cited a February article from the *Wall Street Journal* that he said pointed out that luxury boxes are not fiscally prudent, and that they are being abandoned by many professional sports teams. He urged interested people to visit an informational website at <http://www.savethebighouse.com>.

The guests left the meeting at 3:30 P.M.

ADIDAS CONTRACT

The agenda item was postponed.

M-CARE/BLUE CROSS TRANSITION

Chair Smith reported that the Michigan Healthy Community steering committee has learned that a new Medical Benefits advisory committee was created last week. The new committee is charged with providing advice to executive officers about the medical benefits that should be offered. The committee is composed mainly of physicians from the hospital.

OLD BUSINESS

Regents Updates-

Chair Smith reported that *University Record* editor Laurel Gnagey said that she would consult with Cynthia Willbanks regarding publication of SACUA's Regents' Updates, but there has been no further action. He said that any number of examples exist to show that administration does not consult with elected faculty governance before taking important actions, and he suggested that a Faculty Perspectives article would be in order.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John Lehman
Senate Secretary

University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 5.02:
Governing Bodies in Schools and Colleges

In each school, college, or degree granting division of the University, including those at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and at the University of Michigan-Flint, the governing faculty shall be in charge of the affairs of the school, college, or division, except as delegated to the executive committee, if any, and except that in the School of Graduate Studies the governing board shall be the executive board, and in the Medical School shall be the executive faculty.
